

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

WILD DOLPHIN PROJECT

Continuity is Essential!

Continuity is Essential!

Greetings and a warm welcome to all of you in this Fall 2008 newsletter. I am happy to report that at the end of our 24th field season this year, the dolphins are back to normal social behavior and producing a multitude of new calves. As many of you know, Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne in 2004, and Hurricane Wilma in 2005 had a devastating effect on our study site, and on this resident group of dolphins.

Not only did we lose many of our well-known individuals after these storms, but their entire social structure was disrupted. Whether they were still traumatized from these events, spending more time foraging, or forming new friendships, it has taken over three years for normal activities to resume.

To date, we have not seen any significant return of our lost individuals. They may have moved elsewhere in the northern Bahamas. We are matching photo identification slides from other colleagues in the area to confirm. We are also trying to search in areas where we go infrequently, still hoping to find some displaced dolphins.

It may also be that many of the dolphins did not survive the storm itself. Turbulent seas and a stationary eye wall could easily challenge an air-breathing mammal. It's a clear but cruel reminder that we cannot let any species, or communities of animals waiver on the brink of extinction due to human activity; in the end nature can still have a powerful influence on survival.

Thanks to all our long-term members for continuing to support our ongoing research. It is because we are out there every summer, tracking known individuals and monitoring their behavior, that we recognize significant changes. It is not unusual to get questions about the value of our long-term research after our lectures or during our fundraising talks.

Well, this is it, a clear example of why wildlife needs to be monitored and tracked. It helps us, as researchers and citizens of the planet, to track changes and be the voice to testify to these changes. We bear witness to the dolphin's lives, to their struggles, and tell the story of another sentient species on the planet, through the trials and tribulations, their births and deaths. And it is we who are also richer for it, to share the planet with another intelligent species is a true gift, and not one we can afford to waste.

Dr. Denise L Herzing

Research Director, WDP

2008 Guggenheim Fellow

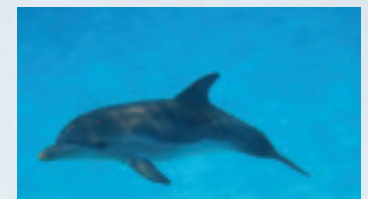


Upper left: This is a young female dolphin, Amanda, in 2006. Her dorsal fin has a small nick in the lower trailing edge of her dorsal fin, and she has a few spots on her belly. Compare this to her picture in 2008. (upper right).

Upper right: You can see that Amanda (2008) has a few more noticeable nicks in the upper trailing edge of her dorsal fin, and she has many, new spots on her belly. A lot can change in just a year or two. This is why it is so important for us to get out every year. We need to keep track of these changes to be able to continue to follow the lives of the individuals we have come to know so well.



Upper Left: This is Littlehali, a young adult female that disappeared after the hurricanes in 2004. She is the daughter of Littlelash, and sister of Lhasa and Laguna (Laguna had her first calf, Leucadia (see pic) this summer!). Littlehali is one of many well known individuals that we have lost after the devastating hurricanes.

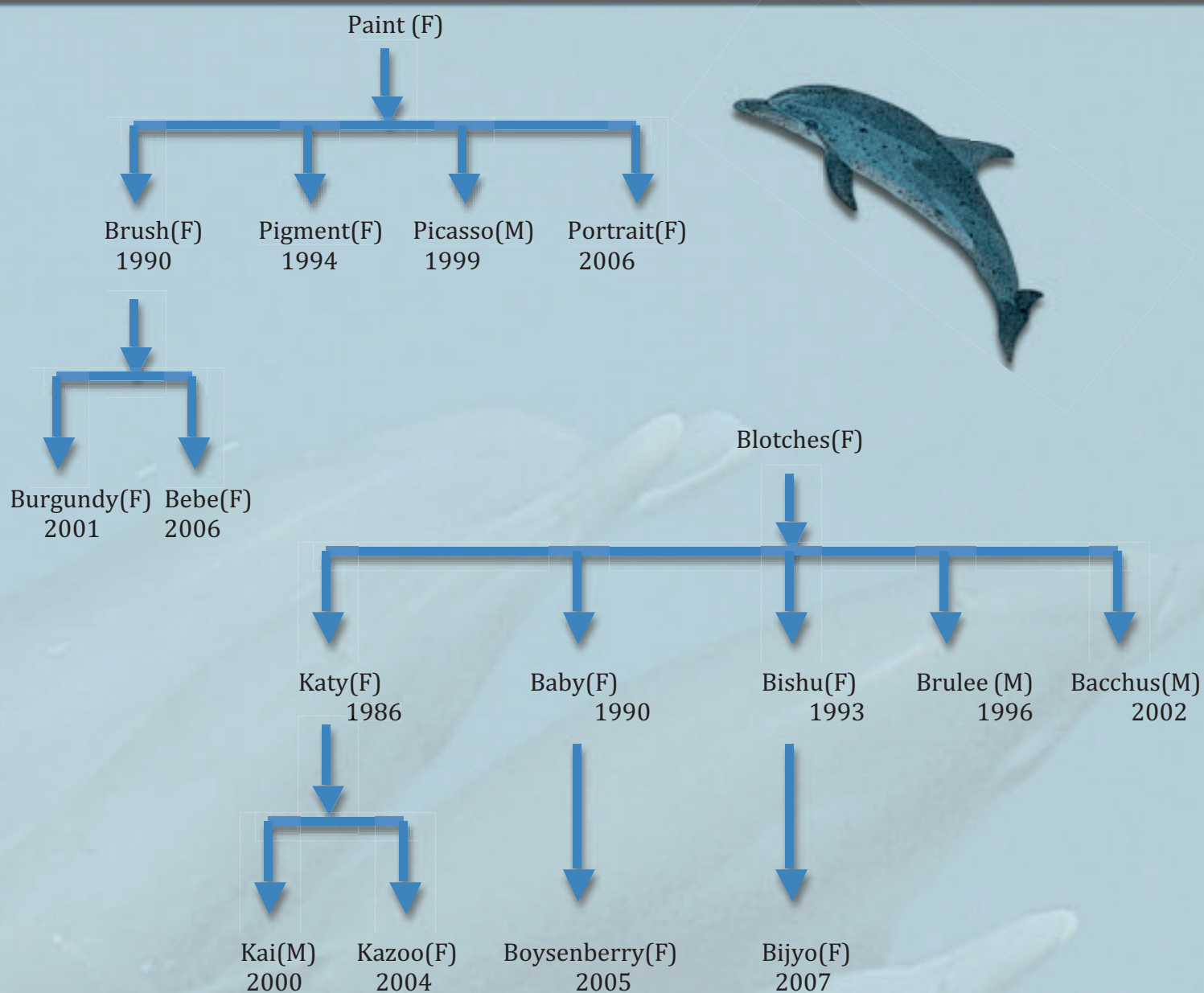


Upper right: 2008 we welcomed a new calf to our population, and another third generation family! This is Leucadia, a male whose mother is Laguna, and grandmother is Littlelash.

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Family Trees



Did you ever wonder what a dolphin family tree looks like? Well, here is your chance to find out. These are two 3rd generation family trees. Next to the individual names is their sex (M=male; F=female) and below is their birth year. Fathers of these individuals are currently unknown (except for Picasso - whose father is most likely Biggash), but through further genetic analysis from fecal samples (yes, poo!) we hope to be able to add fathers and their offspring to these family trees.

As you can see they can get quite large - imagine what they will look like in another generation! Did you know that dolphin aunts and uncles can actually be the same age or younger than their nieces/nephews? This can happen because grandmothers can have offspring at the same time as their daughters. Take a look at the Paint family - Portrait was born the same year as her niece, Bebe, and is much younger than her niece Burgundy.

Through our long-term study we have been able to compile these family trees, gaining insight into dolphin families and life history. Much information has been gained - just think how much more detail we can add to these in the years ahead!

Members in Action

Tara Mullen is a very special 7 year-old girl and one that WDP is proud to have as a member! Tara's 7th birthday was on August 8 this past year and prior to this important day, Tara took an evaluation of her toys to see what she would ask for when presented the big question "What do you want for your birthday?" For most children this would include the latest and greatest toys on the market. For Tara it was having people donate money to help protect her favorite animal, the dolphin. "It all started one day about how many toys I have", said Tara. Dolphins are Tara's favorite animal and in fact she is involved in the Ocean Creatures and Habitat group at her school. Tara chose WDP after searching the Internet and came across WDP's kids page. She downloaded the crossword puzzles and games. Tara's passion shined through to her friends and family as she raised over \$200 to help support WDP.



When asked how she felt after the fact, Tara said she felt really good about asking for donations to help support WDP instead of toys. She enjoyed sharing the goodies WDP provided her with her friends, classmates and teachers at her birthday pool party. In fact, even months later she is still sharing her info with others. Tara is such a role model that her friends have started to do similar acts of kindness. One friend helped raise money for cats and is now going to get a cat as a pet! Tara's younger brother, Kiran Mullen, will be turning 5 this upcoming March and he is too excited to follow in his sister's footsteps. "I wanna do it too, I wanna do it too" were enthusiastic shouts out of Kiran from the side! This seems to be a beginning of something wonderful. Tara and her brother want to continue donating to help others. As you can see this is a very special family. Tara had the opportunity to travel with her mom to India and saw people who were less fortunate and needed help. This was the inspiration behind their acts of kindness.



It is easy to get wrapped up in our personal difficulties during troubling times. Sometimes it takes looking through the eyes of a child to remember the important things in life and how fortunate we truly are as individuals, a society and as a nation. There are many people, organizations and other species on this planet who benefit from acts of kindness such as Tara's. As the holidays draw near, take time to show your loved ones how special they are and if the opportunity presents itself please share your fortunes with others. Whether it is with WDP or another special organization, your donations of in-kind, time and money go a long way and help provide security for the future generations.



From WDP to you and your family, Happy Holidays!



TOP 10 WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

- 1-Energy efficient:** Replace all light bulbs with energy efficient light bulbs — they last longer too; hang dry your clothes; get a programmable thermostat- set it for warmer/colder temperatures during the day when you aren't in the house to save energy.
- 2-Conserve water:** turn off when brushing teeth/shaving, water your lawn only when needed, only run full loads in your dishwasher/washing machine and use power saving options.
- 3-Recycle:** paper, plastic, aluminum and glass (most communities have bins and pick up free of charge). Start a recycling program at your school or office.
- 4- Alternative Bags:** Use canvas bags (reusable) for grocery shopping
- 5- Decrease fuel consumption:** When possible, walk, ride a bike or use public transportation instead of driving. If possible drive a hybrid car.
- 6- Let your voice be heard:** Write to your local government officials showing your support when important environmental legislation is up for a vote, and get out and vote when it is on the ballot for public approval; Write to companies asking to stop the use of excessive and/or environmentally unfriendly packaging.
- 7- Re-use:** packaging (bubble wrap, peanuts, boxes) from shipped items, paper (write on scrap) sandwich bags, retail bags, etc. and use biodegradable peanuts instead of styrofoam peanuts.
- 8- Clean it up:** Organize a clean up day for your neighborhood, local street or beach.
- 9- Dispose of properly:** Don't litter! Properly throw away balloons or better yet, don't use them!
- 10- Say "No" to Styrofoam:** Don't use it and get your office/school to substitute these products.

Development Update & Bulletin Board

Colorado Fundraiser

The Wild Dolphin Project went to the Wild West! Dr. Herzing and Cindy Rogers spoke at The Wildlife Experience Museum on October 17, 2008. Over 200 people attended this event to learn more about dolphins and The Wild Dolphin Project. This was a great way to raise awareness and gain exposure for WDP in a new region. A big THANKS to all who attended and supported this event. Please remember, a membership is never outdated and makes for a great gift!

11th Annual No-Show Ball

The Board of Directors and Staff of The Wild Dolphin Project cordially invite you to sit back and indulge in guilt-free bliss while you proudly confirm your absence to the Ball. What better way to spend your Wednesday night, but at home with your family and loved ones?

When: December 31, 2008
Where: Your favorite spot
Who: You, your family and friends
Why: To help support The Wild Dolphin Project's Mission

For more information please visit our website at www.wilddolphinproject.org or keep an eye out in the mail for our upcoming 'formal' invite!

SAVE THE DATE!! 2nd Annual Auction!!

Since last April's auction was such a HUGE hit, we decided to make it an annual event! Mark your calendars now: **Saturday, April 25, 2008** in Palm Beach Florida. There will be a silent and live auction with fantastic items such as weekend getaways, artwork, wine tours, and much more! This is an invite only event so please contact Kali at kdambeck@wilddolphinproject.org to make sure you get on the list!

WDP SHOPPING CHILDREN'S & ADULT T-SHIRTS \$15

LONG SLEEVE SHIRTS \$25



ADULT POLO SHIRT (UNISEX)
\$40

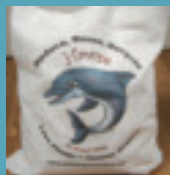


ADULT LADIES FITTED V-NECK
COLLAR SHIRT \$40

VISORS \$15



REUSABLE BAG \$10
HELP KEEP PLASTIC OUT OF
THE OCEAN AND LANDFILLS,
USE REUSABLE BAGS!



MEMBERSHIP \$PRICESLESS

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PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE AT 561.575.5660
IF YOU WOULD LIKE SPECIFICS ABOUT ANY OF THE
ITEMS ON OUR LIST.

STOCKS

Wanna get creative in your giving? Sick of watching your stocks go down? We'll be happy to take them off your watch list! What better way to help WDP than to turn over some of your stocks to WDP. Your generous donation will support the ongoing research of wild dolphins. Contact us or the myFi group with Solomon Smith Barney: 877-357-0888.

The Wild Dolphin Project

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(Donations received before June 15, 2008)

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Please note: All monetary giving is based on a calendar year and is accrued throughout the year. The No Show Ball funding is carried over to the following year.

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Product and In-Kind Gifts:

Blue Water Graphics and Southeastern Printing, Don Mader, for donation of the booth at ArtiGras, production of the newsletters holiday cards, auction invites, programs, also additional printing needs for WDP; **Shaklee Corporation** for supplying WDP with their environment-friendly products for R/V *Stenella* and the research office; Publix for reusable bags, Ruth Petzold for a printer, artwork and much more, Medicaid Area 9 for the 11 laptops, Mr. & Mrs. Kollmeyer for the office equipment, Dr. Thomas White for his books in the No Show, Ball Dolphin Designs for donated earrings in the No Show Ball and Ellen Massey for donating jewelry to the No Show Ball.

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WDP would like to apologize for any misprints, mistakes or omissions. Please notify us with any changes and we will be sure to correct them in the next issue of *Notes from the Field*. Thank you.

IN THIS ISSUE

CONTINUITY IS ESSENTIAL!

FAMILY TREES

MEMBERS IN ACTION

RESEARCH, EDUCATION,
CONSERVATION

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

BULLETIN BOARD

THANK YOU'S



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DOLPHIN
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Research, Education, Conservation
& Non-Profit Organization

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**All memberships are based on a calendar year.
All monetary contributions are accumulated to your annual membership.*

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SUPPORT.**

Names only will be published in newsletter, annual reports, etc.
If you would like to be anonymous, please check here.

You can also become a member online! Please visit www.wilddolphinproject.org and click on "Donate/Renew Membership."

All donations are tax deductible as allowed by law. Please make
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8436 Jupiter, Florida 33468.

Research, EDUCATION educating students

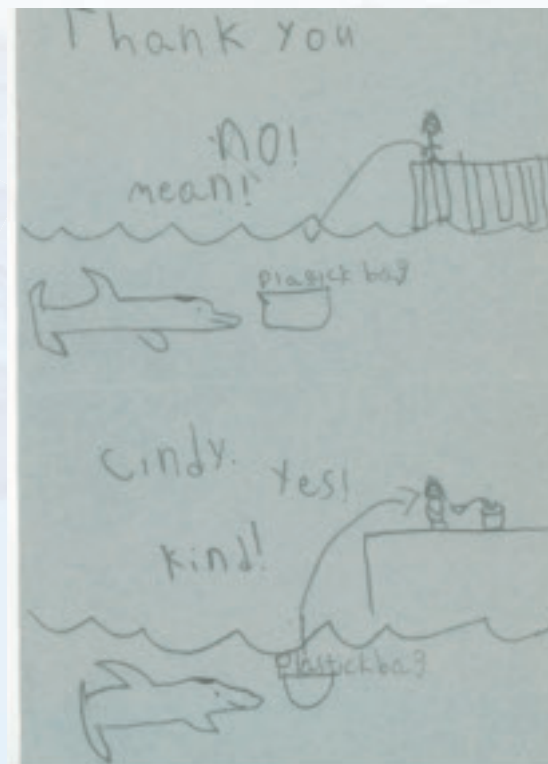
Research, Education, Conservation. These are the primary goals of the Wild Dolphin Project. You often hear about our research and conservation efforts, but perhaps you don't know as much about the education portion of the project. WDP gives many educational presentations to a variety of people, from elementary school students, to adults of all ages. Education is the key to raising public awareness about the lives and struggles of marine mammals and the oceans. This can empower people to make changes (in their daily lives, community and government) to help protect and conserve the environment. Especially important are children, as what they learn now will help to shape the world in the years to come.

I give talks to students in 2nd grade to seniors in high school. Some of these students are already involved in environmental groups at school, whereas others have hardly thought about the environment or why it is important. With the development of technology comes important advancements, but also has the ability to divorce us from the outdoors. This is evident in classrooms where some students almost never spend time outside, and have no emotional connection to animals or the environment. Dolphins seem to have the ability to reach almost anyone – I hardly ever hear “no, I don't like dolphins”. So I have the chance to get these kids interested in science and the environment by teaching them about dolphins, the ocean and why we should care about them.

The enthusiasm of elementary school children is very exciting. Even the students that previously showed no interest in the environment or science become captivated as I talk about dolphins and their daily lives. They eagerly raise their hands after the presentation to ask questions, or to tell me about an experience they had seeing a dolphin

in the wild. I get awesome questions from these young students, such as “how do dolphins sleep?”, “how do you tell the difference between a shark and a dolphin?” and “how long can dolphins hold their breath?”. Their excitement for the subject is shown through so many great questions and time usually runs out before I can answer them all.

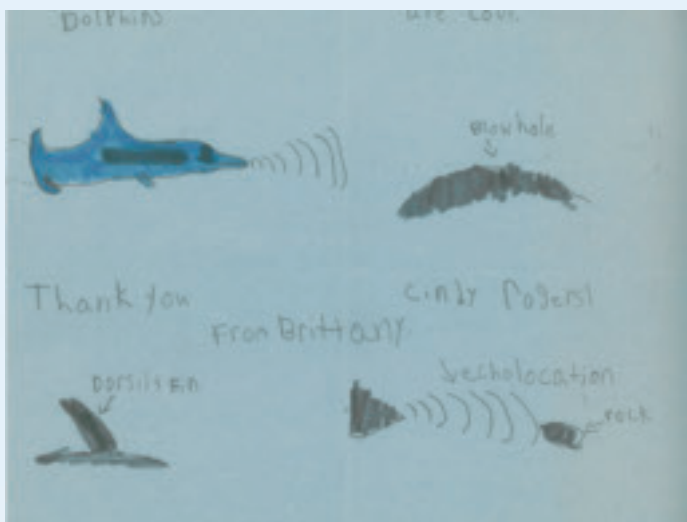
The high school classes are exciting in a different way.



This is the front cover of the same thank you card showing what the right thing to do is – pick up plastic when you see it in the ocean.

I often give presentations to classes in environmental programs, where the students are already very interested in science and the environment. Especially in Florida, many students are interested in the oceans and the animals that inhabit them. It is wonderful to be able to educate them on a topic that they are very excited about, and may be interested in pursuing as a career. It is important for these students, who are thinking about further schooling and possible careers, to see and meet scientists that are working in the field. We can show them what it takes, that it can be done and that it can make a difference. I tell them a little about myself, how I got to where I am and what is important when pursuing a career in marine mammalogy.

After getting the students engaged and interested, I turn to how they can help protect the health of the dolphins and the oceans. Through individual acts like picking up trash, recycling/reusing items, and community projects like



This is the inside of a Thank You card showing different elements students learn from the presentation.

EDUCATION, Conservation: Presentations through presentations

beach or city clean up days, they can make a difference in the world they live in. The students can use what they have been taught to make informed choices about their actions and share with others what they have learned. If each child goes home and does just one small thing different in their daily lives, that is making a difference, and the environment will be better for it now, and for years to come.



This is the inside of a colorful cover thank you card. This student even put in a picture of a crater (made by a foraging bottlenose dolphin), something new they learned about in the presentation.

I have received thank you letters that show me that the students have learned something important that will stay with them and influence their decisions for years to come. For example, one student drew me a picture of how we (WDP) try to clean up the ocean by picking up plastic bags we find floating in the water (see picture). Another youngster, at only eleven years old, shows us her unselfish and giving nature, and how even at a young age, you can be a leader in helping dolphins and the environment. This little girl chose to support dolphin research instead of getting presents for her birthday! The other children at her party were very excited to learn more about what she was doing, and whom she was supporting. Read her story in the members in action article in this newsletter.

Children like these show us that one choice can make a difference, and we hope that children can take what they have learned from our presentations and do what they can to help protect dolphins and the environment. We want to educate children from a young age to be stewards of the environment, a philosophy that will stay

with them as they grow and make decisions as adults.

Receiving thank you cards from the students over the last few years is one of the most rewarding results of my presentations. Some say "thank you for teaching us about dolphins", and some (as mentioned above) even add in a fact or two that they learned from listening to my talk (see pictures). From high school classes I get students that are interested in volunteering or conducting a research project involving marine mammals. I had one student do their science fair project on the process of identifying both spotted and bottlenose dolphins.

It is evident that the students were engaged and interested in the material presented to them

and that they learned something new that may influence their choices/actions now and in the future. That is the ultimate goal of education, and what we strive to accomplish in our presentations about dolphins and the oceans they inhabit.

Cindy Rogers, M.S.

PhD candidate

Research Assistant

The Wild Dolphin Project

